

to all foreign nations, to the Mother Country and to each other.

In so far as the right here claimed consists in fixing rates of Customs duties applying equally to all foreign nations, the Mother Country and British Colonies, Her Majesty's Government do not contest the statement. But if the statement is to be taken as extending to the claim of the right to establish discriminating treatment between different foreign nations or against the Mother Country or in favour of particular colonies, Her Majesty's Government are obliged to point out that the claim is stated too broadly, for no such general right has hitherto been recognized, nor is it clear that it would be admitted by foreign countries.

I have to point out that the denunciation of these two treaties would not of itself confer upon the Dominion the freedom in fiscal matters which it desires to obtain, and I am disposed to doubt whether the extensive changes that would have to be made had been fully realized in putting forward this proposal.

These remarks must be regarded, we think, as furnishing a very different answer to our question, "Why should not Canada be empowered to make the best trade arrangements possible with other nations on her own responsibility," from that given by the *Gazette*. At the same time we are bound to admit that, in putting the question, THE WEEK—like the Canadian Government and Parliament in passing the address—may not have fully realized the "extensive changes" which would be involved, arising out of the "most favoured nation" clauses of Great Britain's treaties with other nations.

WHILE we are upon this topic, so closely related to Canadian well-being and progress, we cannot refrain from calling attention to one striking and apparently deeply significant paragraph in Lord Knutsford's despatch, which we do not remember to have seen commented on by any of our contemporaries. It is as follows:—

It is unnecessary now to examine the questions whether a self-governing colony is capable, with the assistance of Her Majesty's Government, by negotiations in the usual diplomatic course, to enter into special fiscal arrangements with a particular foreign State, or the question whether such colony is competent, without Imperial Legislation similar to the Australian Colonies Customs Act, 1872, to grant discriminating duties in favour of particular colonies; for these questions, important as they are, may be dealt with independent of the Anglo-Belgium and Anglo-Zollverein treaties, to which the address of the Canadian Parliament specially relates.

It must, we think, have occurred to many that it is difficult to reconcile the general tenor of the British Government's reply to the Canadian address with the fact that envoys of the Canadian Government have been, not surely without the concurrence of the Home Office, visiting various Colonial Governments, and even that of the United States also, with a view to the formation of just such preferential trade arrangements as those which we now learn could not be carried out without a "great break up" of Great Britain's commercial relations with various nations, such a break up as she very naturally declines to contemplate. Even if we suppose Mr. Foster to have been reckoning without his host, in a two-fold sense, when he was trying to bring about preferential agreements with the British West Indies, it is certain that he went to Washington with the knowledge and assent of the Home Government, and that all negotiations were to have been carried on there with the aid and concurrence of the British Minister. And yet, so far as we can see, even had the Canadian Ministers been ever so successful in framing an agreement for reciprocity in natural products only, such an arrangement could not have been carried into effect without admitting to its benefits not only Germany and Belgium, but all other countries which have "favoured nation" clauses in their treaties with Great Britain. Yet the extract above quoted surely implies that the power of a self-governing colony to make such fiscal arrangements, even with the assistance of Her Majesty's Government, is doubtful. Not only so, but Lord Knutsford's words seem to imply further that this doubtfulness exists, even apart from the question of the bearing of the Anglo-Belgium and Anglo-Zollverein treaties upon it. To what can the reference be if not to the constitutional question? We suppose, however, that we are not just now called on to attempt to fathom the meaning of this somewhat obscure passage. In taking leave of the general subject, two queries force themselves upon the mind. First, though this does not, perhaps, so immediately concern us, Are these treaties quite in harmony with the free-trade principles to which the people of the Mother Country are so ardently and with so good reason attached? Second, what is to become

of unhappy Canada if both the avenues of escape which are being looked to as promising deliverance from existing trade embarrassments, the one by the Government, the other by the Opposition, are to be thus ruthlessly closed and the country shut up to its present system, without the stimulus of a hopeful outlook in either direction?

#### OTTAWA LETTER.

IN reply to a question by Sir Richard Cartwright, the Minister of Justice said that the Redistribution Bill would be submitted early this week. This was welcome news to the House, as it seems impossible to make any noticeable progress in the work of the session until this long-looked-for measure has been submitted. The House has been in committee of supply several times, but progress has been slow. When the vote for immigration purposes came up the Opposition took a determined stand. They had the vantage and they knew it. Whoever is to blame we have not been successful in attracting immigrants, relative at all events to the amount of money which has been expended for the purpose. It was, therefore, with some reason that Sir Richard demanded before a single item was passed that Parliament should know the future policy of the Government with respect to immigration. Mr. Carling did not make a very strong defence, but promised that the end of the year would show something phenomenal in the way of settlers, who are to come, not only from Great Britain and Europe, but also by thousands from the United States. Two or three thousand people, he said, came from Dakota to our North-West last year, and many more would follow their example before the next session of Parliament. While on this question, that bugbear to the Government—the census—was resurrected from the convenient burying place where the Opposition have it hid ready to produce at any moment.

Sir Richard exhumed it on this particular occasion, stood it on its feet, then on its head, and presented the unwelcome creature in every conceivable form to the disgust of the Ministry and their supporters and to the infinite appreciation of the gentlemen of the Opposition. Mr. McMullen (figuratively speaking) clapped his hands with pleasure and shouted with delight.

A message from the Governor-General was received transmitting a reply from the Imperial Government to an address by the Parliament of Canada, praying that Her Majesty would take such steps as might be necessary to denounce and terminate the provisions contained in the most-favoured-nation clauses of the treaties with the German Zollverein and the kingdom of Belgium.

Lord Knutsford states that Her Majesty's Government have felt themselves unable to advise Her Majesty to comply with the prayer of the address. Reasons for coming to this conclusion are given at length. The Secretary for the colonies says "that the denunciation of these two treaties would not of itself confer upon the Dominion the freedom in fiscal matters which it desires to obtain, and I am disposed to doubt whether the extensive changes that would have to be made have been fully realized in putting forth this proposal. Many of the commercial treaties entered into by this country contain most-favoured-nation clauses, and these treaties apply in many instances to the Mother Country and to all the colonies. In order, therefore, to confer upon the Dominion complete freedom in its negotiations with foreign powers, it would be necessary to revise very extensively the existing commercial treaties of the British Empire, and a great break-up of existing commercial relations, of which Canada now enjoys the benefit, is involved in the suggestion." In the message it is further pointed out that Canada profits in the reduction of duties on goods exported to Germany, which last year amounted to £100,000.

Quite an animated discussion arose on Friday over Mr. Tupper's Bill respecting fishing vessels of the United States of America, which provides that power to renew the *modus vivendi* shall be vested in the Governor-in-Council, instead of the consent of Parliament being required every season. Col. O'Brien, M.P., of Equal Rights fame, who has on many occasions shown himself to be possessed of an independent spirit, which might, with benefit to themselves and the country, be imitated by other Conservatives, took a very determined stand against the Bill. He thought there was a growing tendency in all our legislation to have a good deal too much government by order-in-council. He objected to the Bill on this ground, and also because it would give colour to the establishment of a vested right in a matter which we had always proclaimed and held to be a special privilege of our own.

Sir John Thompson pointed out that the Governor-in-Council had already been obliged by the nature of things to exercise the authority in advance of the assent of Parliament, for the reason, principally, that the outfit of the American fishing vessels had to be begun very early in the year, before Parliament could meet. Unless the fishermen knew early in January whether they were to have the privilege of calling at our ports for bait and supplies, and for transhipment, the privilege was entirely useless to them by the time a statute could be passed by this Parliament; and from year to year we had to say in advance, taking the risk of Parliament sanctioning our action, and taking into consideration the circumstances existing at the time, whether the privilege of these licenses should be granted to American fishermen. The

Minister of Justice also called the attention of the House to the fact that the proclamation was not permanent, but that on the contrary licenses issued under the proclamation expired every year and it was entirely in the hands of Parliament whether or not the Act should be continued. Mr. Davies, who is probably the most argumentatively inclined member of the House, taunted the Government with having gone back on its principles, and adopting as practically permanent a policy which they had in times past pronounced to be only excusable as a temporary concession to the Americans, with a view of bringing them to "better terms."

There is another aspect of the Bill which, as Mr. Laurier asserted, is a "new departure." It is an amendment, providing that if the proposed hostile policy of Newfoundland towards Canada is carried out, licenses issued to American vessels in the ports of Newfoundland shall not entitle the American fishermen to privileges in Canadian ports. As this is a matter of great importance, implying an entire change in the provisions of the *modus vivendi*, further time to consider the amendment was asked and granted.

It has long been the opinion of the thinking people in Ontario that the salaries paid to the judges of the High Courts are inadequate to the duties which they are called upon to perform. Notwithstanding the honour which attaches to a judgeship, one can scarcely expect a lawyer having a practice varying from ten to twenty thousand dollars a year to be content with one-quarter the amount while holding a more public and more exacting position. Yet, of course, it does not follow that a money-making lawyer must of necessity be a success on the bench. Sir John Thompson has given notice of a resolution increasing the salaries of the judges throughout the Dominion by one thousand dollars per annum. This measure will probably meet with the unanimous approval of Parliament.

A few weeks ago M. Marceau, one of the two French stenographers on the Hansard staff, died of typhoid fever in Montreal. The vacancy has been filled by the appointment of M. Desjardins. On this recommendation from the chairman of the Debates Committee being submitted to Parliament, a strife arose among several of the French members. M. Langelier and his associates contended that the new appointee was not qualified for the position. Of course they disclaimed any personal animus in the matter; but it turns out that the Langeliers and the Desjardins are living under the influence of an old feud; hence the rub. M. Desjardins gets his appointment, however.

The Imperial Federation members of the House had a field day on Monday. Mr. McNeill, one of the most ardent advocates of closer relations, political and commercial, between Great Britain and the Colonies, introduced the following resolution: "That if and when the Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland admits Canadian products to the markets of the United Kingdom upon more favourable terms than it accords to the products of foreign countries, the Parliament of Canada will be prepared to accord corresponding advantages by a reduction in the duties it imposes upon British manufactured goods." In the debate which ensued and lasted up to nearly two o'clock on Tuesday morning, several good speakers took part. They were mostly Conservatives, and favoured the principle of the resolution. Messrs. Hazen and Skinner, of St. John, N.B., ably supported Mr. McNeill; while a speech which would have been no discredit to his illustrious father was made by Mr. Hugh John Macdonald, of Winnipeg. For the Liberals, Mr. Davies made a remarkably fine speech; and he certainly perplexed the Government when he moved an amendment favouring a reduction of duty on British goods. This was out-heroding Herod with a vengeance, and, although the Government treated the matter lightly, it is not improbable that it may be used with considerable effect upon the stump at a future day. The division on the amendment and on the main motion resulted in a straight party vote, the Government having a majority of 34 in a House of 140 members.

It is now announced that the Redistribution Bill will be submitted to the House on Thursday, and that it will be so simple in its provisions as to lead to little if any discussion. It may be taken for granted that among the changes will be one increasing the representation in this House of the City of Toronto. T. C. L. K.

WHOEVER considers the study of anatomy, I believe will never be an atheist; the frame of man's body and coherence of his parts being so strange and paradoxical that I hold it to be the greatest miracle of Nature.—*Herbert of Cherbury.*

THE latest additions to the Zoological Society's Gardens of London include a common rhea, from South America, presented by Mrs. Hatfield; a Brazilian caracara, from Brazil, presented by Mr. J. D. Spooner; a green-cheeked Amazon, from Colombia, presented by Miss Julia Croke; two leopard tortoises, five angulated tortoises, a tuberculated tortoise, four areolated tortoises, a Hygian snake, four smooth-clawed frogs, from South Africa, presented by the Rev. G. H. R. Fisk, C.M.Z.S., a L'huys Impehan pheasant, from Western China, deposited; two white-throated capuchins, from Central America; a Coquerel's lemur, from Madagascar; a small-clawed otter, from India; a collared peccary, from South America; and six Amherst's pheasants, from Szechuan, China, purchased.